

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the careful consideration of this application. Claims 1-23, 25-39, and 43-45 are currently pending. Claims 1-20 have been allowed. Claims 21, 22, 25, 28, and 29 have been amended. Claim 24 has been cancelled, without prejudice. Withdrawn claims 40-42 (each independent) have been cancelled and replaced with new independent claims 43-45. Claims 43-45 have been added pursuant to MPEP § 821.04(b) as method claims that contain all elements of allowed apparatus claims. Based on the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 102

The Office Action rejected claims 21-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Publication No. US 2004/0164047 A1, by White. Claim 21 is an independent claim. Applicants have amended claim 21 to recite that the radially inner portions of the circumferentially spaced channels lie on an hourglass-shaped surface of revolution around said axis of said sidewall. This claim element was previously presented in allowable dependent claim 24, now cancelled. Contrary to the claimed invention, White discloses only an “intermediate panel section defining a circumference.” (Cl. 1, p. 2.) Thus, White does not disclose or suggest an hourglass-shaped surface of revolution for the radially inner portions of the channels. In addition, Applicants have amended claim 22 to clarify that the surface of revolution on which the outer surface of the land areas reside, rather than the one on which the radially inner portions of

the longitudinal channels reside, is cylindrical. Claims 25, 28, and 29 have been amended to correct their dependencies. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that the amendments to claims 21 and 22 render claims 21 and all of its dependent claims patentable over White.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103

The Office Action rejected claims 30, 31, and 37-39 as obvious over White in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,303,834, to Krishnakumar et al. Claim 30 depends from claim 21. Thus, in view of the amendment to claim 21 described above, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 30 is patentable over White. Furthermore, Krishnakumar does not disclose or suggest the claimed “hourglass-shaped surface of revolution” and thus does not cure the defect in the White reference. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 30 is patentable over the combination of White and Krishnakumar.

Claim 31 is an independent claim from which claims 37-39 depend. Applicants respectfully submit that claim 31 is patentable over the combination of White and Krishnakumar and thus respectfully requests that the rejection of these claims be withdrawn. Claim 31 discloses a sidewall whose longitudinal and circumferential channels have “radially inner portions at differing radii with respect to an axis of the sidewall.” In other words, this claim element states that the distance between the axis of the sidewall and the radially inner portions of the channels varies as one progresses around a circumferential channel or down a longitudinal channel. Exemplary, non-limiting embodiments of this claim feature are shown in Figures 8A

and 8B in the application: the distance between the axis 30 and sidewalls 33a and 33b varies from the top of the illustrated axis segment to its bottom. In contrast to the claimed invention, White discloses a sidewall that “defin[es] a circumference” (Cl. 1, p. 2), in which the radially inner portions of the sidewall are all at the *same* radius from an axis of the sidewall. White does not disclose or suggest a sidewall for which the distance between the axis and the radially inner portions of the sidewall varies. Therefore, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 31, and thus dependent claims 37-39, are patentable over White. Furthermore, Krishnakumar does not disclose or suggest a sidewall for which the distance between the axis and the radially inner portions of the sidewall varies. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 31 and 37-39 are patentable over the combination of White and Krishnakumar.

Method Claims Added Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 1.121 and MPEP § 821.04(b)

Method claims 40-42 were withdrawn in response to a restriction requirement issued in the Office Action dated September 23, 2005. MPEP § 821.04(b) authorizes applicants to add claims drawn to methods of making a claimed product, provided the method is disclosed and the method claims include all elements of allowable product claims. Pursuant to MPEP § 821.04(b), Applicants have added claims 43-45. Claims 43 and 44 are method claims that include all elements of allowed claims 1 and 13, respectively. Method claim 45 includes all elements of claim 21, as amended herein. Applicants respectfully submit, as discussed above, that amended claim 21 is in condition for allowance. In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 45 also meets the requirements of MPEP § 821.04(b). Thus, Applicants respectfully

Applicant: Timothy P. Axe et al.
Appl. No.: 10/664,372

request that the new claims be entered into the application and that the restriction requirement be withdrawn.

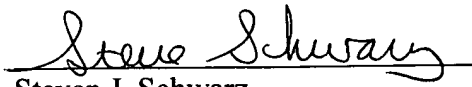
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants, therefore, respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is hereby invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: 9/7/06


Steven J. Schwarz
Registration No. 47,070
VENABLE LLP
P.O. Box 34385
Washington, DC 20043-9998
Telephone: (202) 344-4000
Direct Dial: (202) 344-4295
Telefax: (202) 344-8300